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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/710,999	11/09/2000	Tetsunosuke Fujisaki	YOR919990527US2	5835

48062 7590 06/09/2010
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EXAMINER

SUBRAMANIAN, NARAYANSWAMY

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3695

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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06/09/2010

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to applicant's communication of May 19, 2010. Amendments to claims 1, 17 and 32 have been entered. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 20-21 and 32 are pending and have been examined. The rejections and response to arguments are stated below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 20-21 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1, 17 and 32 recite in the preamble "A method/system/tangible article of manufacture for processing transactions involving financial securities in a secondary market". It is unclear at which of the step of the claim the transactions are processed. Hence the scope of the claim is unclear. Also in these claims the limitation "to identify pending bids that are in proximity to each divided bid" is interpreted as an intended use of the comparing step. Dependent claims are are rejected by way of dependency on a rejected independent claim.

Claim 1 recites the limitations "establishing a plurality of market segments in said secondary market, each of said market segments having at least one market participant" and "receiving a bid for one or more financial securities, said bid including one or more authorized market segments". It is not clear if these critical steps of the invention are performed by a processor. Dependent claims are are rejected by way of dependency on a rejected independent claim.

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Claims 2 and 18 recite the limitation “preventing said bid from being posted to market participants not in said one or more authorized market segments”. It is not clear if the “said bid” refers to the received bid or the divided bids.

Claims 4-5 and 20-21 recite the limitations “establishing a communication channel between entities associated with two bids that are in proximity”. It is not clear if the two bids that are in proximity refer to a posted divided bid and a pending bid in proximity to it or just any two pending bids that are in proximity to each other.

Appropriate correction is required. The rejections below are interpreted in light of the 112, second paragraph rejections above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 20-21 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Woolston (US Patent 6,266,651 B1) in view of Gulati (US Patent 6,778,968 B1) and further in view of Gary (US Patent 6,618,707 B1).

Claims 1, 17 and 32, Woolston teaches a method, a system and an article of manufacture respectively for processing transactions in a secondary market, the method comprising the steps of establishing a plurality of market segments in said secondary market, each of said market segments having at least one market participant (See Woolston Column 1

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lines 51-67, the tiers constitute the market segments and used goods imply secondary markets); receiving a bid for one or more goods, said bid including one or more authorized market segments (See Woolston claim 35, receiving bids from retail segment is implied in the disclosure). A system for processing transactions, comprising a memory that stores computer-readable code and a processor operatively coupled to said memory and an article of manufacture comprising a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon are inherent in the disclosure of Woolston. The Dictionary of Banking Terms defines "a secondary market as the market where existing loans, and other assets are sold to investors, either directly or through an intermediary". Hence the market for used goods and collectibles disclosed in Woolston qualifies as a secondary market.

Woolston does not teach the features wherein the goods are financial securities, dividing by a processor said bid into a plurality of divided bids; posting by said processor each of said divided bids to one or more of said authorized market segments; and comparing by said processor each posted divided bid to other pending bids in one or more of said authorized market segments to identify pending bids that are in proximity to each divided bid.

Gulati teaches the features wherein the goods are financial securities (See the entire disclosure of Gulati particularly Column 1 lines 34-60), dividing by a processor said bid into a plurality of divided bids (See the entire disclosure of Gulati particularly Figures 20-22, Column 9 lines 12-25); posting by said processor each of said divided bids to one or more of said authorized market segments (See the entire disclosure of Gulati particularly Figure 14, Column 16 line 60 – Column 17 line 6).

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Both Woolston and Gulati are concerned with the problem of processing transactions involving two parties. It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the feature taught by Gulati to the invention of Woolston. The motivation to combine is that parties to the transaction would have benefited from being able to communicate and negotiate other terms with each other before finalizing the transaction.

Gary teaches the step of comparing by said processor each posted bid to other pending bids in one or more of said authorized market segments to identify pending bids that are in proximity to each bid (See the entire disclosure of Gary especially Figures 4A-5B and associated portions of the specification, Column 16 lines 17-60, Column 17 line 1- Column 18 line 44).

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include the feature taught by Gary to the invention of Woolston. The motivation to combine is that it helps in improving liquidity and assure fair handling of orders (See Gary Column 4 lines 49-51)

With reference to claims 2, and 18, Woolston teaches the steps of preventing said bid from being posted to market participants not in said one or more authorized market segments (See Woolston Claims 5 and 18, privileges available to only one segment is interpreted to include the step of preventing said bid from being posted to market participants not in said one or more authorized market segments).

With reference to claims 4 and 20, Gulati teaches the step of establishing a communication channel between entities associated with two bids that are in proximity (See Gulati Column 23 lines 25-60).

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With reference to claims 5 and 21, Gary teaches the step wherein two bids are in proximity if they have parameters that are within a given threshold of each other (See the entire disclosure of Gary especially Column 19 line 47- Column 22 line 14, number of ticks is an example of the threshold).

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to pending claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure are listed on the enclosed PTO-892.

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Narayanswamy Subramanian whose telephone number is (571) 272-6751. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Thursday from 8:30 AM to 7:00 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles R. Kyle can be reached at (571) 272-6746. The fax number for Formal or Official faxes and Draft to the Patent Office is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PMR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PMR only. For more information about the PMR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Narayanswamy Subramanian/
Primary Examiner
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June 5, 2010